

From: Paul
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/17/02 3:21pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement.

As a student in the IT field who is nearing graduation I feel compelled to comment on the proposed final settlement between the DOJ and Microsoft corporation. I will be entering a workforce that is compelled to often use products that are less technologically superior and more costly than alternatives. This is due to Microsoft's illegal maintenance of its monopoly in desktop operating systems. Having read the proposed settlement, I feel that it is too lenient and contains too many loopholes to be effective in restoring competition to the desktop computer operating system market and the desktop application market. I also feel that the proposed remedy does little to rectify what has happened to the companies that were crushed by Microsoft's illegal behavior.

It should be clear that with Microsoft's recent entries into almost every consumer electronics device market that Microsoft will seek to drive growth in these markets by leveraging the power of its illegal monopoly. Already we have copy protected audio CD's that will only play on Windows computers and take advantage of the WindowsMedia Player format. Over 90% of all DVD players will soon recognize WindowsMedia format as well. These are direct consequences of the illegal maintenance of their monopoly. What about Apple's operating systems as well as the free Linux operating system which many more people are running every day? As it stands right now there are audio CD's that will not play on my computer if I am running Linux and I feel that the proposed settlement would do nothing to change this matter. As it is outlined in the settlement Microsoft could claim that releasing any API's for WindowsMedia Player would violate the security loophole that they have built into the settlement and further the reliance on Windows.

I also find the section dealing with the technical committee to be absurd. This allows MS to choose one of the 3 people assigned to oversee it. I wish that if I was ever convicted of a crime that I could oversee part of the makeup of the parole board. But of course that only happens for corporations with 30 billion dollars in cash. This board would also only have authority for five years and does not seem to have much power to punish MS if they continue with their wrongdoing.

I am publicly against the proposed settlement and call for a stronger remedy that does not allow Microsoft to continue its past practices.

Paul Virijevich

